

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ST-01 /008 W
----- 090532

R 160934Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6028
INFO AMCONSUL DOUALA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS BANGUI 1129

FROM ADMIN OFFICER NOYES

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASUP, ASEC

SUBJ: OFFICIAL VEHICLES - P.R. 445027

REF: (A) STATE 183808 (B) BANGUI 0632 (C) STATE 185142 (D)
BANGUI 1034 (E) STATE 186551

1. PLEASE RESCHEDULE FORD TORINO FOR ANOTHER POST.
2. NONE OF OUR PRESENT AMERICAN VEHICLES IS WORKING, PARTS ARE UNAVAILABLE LOCALLY AND A TDY AMERICAN MECHANIC WILL HAVE TO BE FLOWN IN AT POST EXPENSE TO PERFORM REPAIRS.
3. IN INTEREST OF U.S.G. AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF EMBASSY, PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE TORINO AND RECONSIDER OUR REQUEST FOR PEUGEOT 504 FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. TOTAL COST TO U.S.G. (PURCHASE AND TRANSPORTATION, ETC.) IS THE SAME FOR AN AMERICAN CAR AND A PEUGEOT 504 FROM PARIS. (TORINO, \$6750; PEUGEOT 504, \$6775) AS FOLLOWING COST COMPARISON ILLUSTRATES:

ITEM	TORINO	PEUGEOT 504
1. PURCHASE PRICE	\$2100 (GSA)	\$4300
	(DUTY-FREE, PARIS)	

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2. OCEAN FREIGHT

A. BALTIMORE - DOUALA	\$1625
B. PARIS - DOUALA	\$1350

3. DOCK CLEARANCE, HANDLING AT DOUALA

A. (BV 512-275) COSTS FOR CHRYSLER	\$575
B. (BV 512-062) COSTS FOR IH PICKUP	\$425

WHICH WAS DRIVEN TO BANGUI

4. TRANSPORTATION, DOUALA - BANGUI

A. (BV 512-275) AIR FREIGHT FOR CHRYSLER -- AMERICAN CARS	
CANNOT BE DRIVEN TO BANGUI	\$1450
B. DRIVING TO BANGUI (CAN BE DONE IN A PEUGEOT): AIR TICKET	
TO DOUALA, \$180; PER DIEM, \$250; GAS, OIL, MAINTENANCE	
EN ROUTE, \$270	\$700

5. STOCKING OF ALL ESSENTIAL SPARE PARTS TO AVOID URGENT

AIR FREIGHT COSTS, AMERICAN AUTO PARTS ONLY (DUE TO	
NON-AVAILABILITY LOCALLY).	\$1000 \$000
TOTAL COST UPON ARRIVAL BANGUI	\$6750 \$6775

B. HEAVY, LOW-SLUNG AMERICAN CAR MUST BE AIR FREIGHTED FROM DOUALA

-- CANNOT BE DRIVEN DUE TO POOR ROADS. PEUGEOT 504 CAN BE DRIVEN.

C. PARTS FOR AMERICAN CAR MUST BE ORDERED WELL IN ADVANCE TO AVOID ONEROUS COST OF AIR FREIGHT. TIRES, A COUPLE OF COMPLETE EXHAUST SYSTEMS, BATTERY, TRANSMISSION OIL, ETC, MUST BE ORDERED. INITIAL SURVIVAL STOCKPILING FOR CHRYSLER ALONE HAS COST \$480; ANOTHER \$500 HAS SINCE BEEN COMMITTED. FURTHERMORE, GASOLINE IS ABOUT \$2.00 PER GALLON AND NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE. PRESENT EMERGENCY RESERVES WILL HAVE TO BE CONSIDERABLY INCREASED FOR AMERICAN CAR.

D. THERE ARE NO MECHANICS QUALIFIED TO REPAIR AMERICAN CARS IN BANGUI. WE HAVE TO FLY IN A TDY MECHANIC FROM ANOTHER AFRICAN POST. LACK OF PARTS AND MECHANIC AND GENERAL UNSUITABILITY OF HEAVY AMERICAN CAR RESULT IN ALMOST CONTINUOUS DEADLINING. SINCE APRIL FOR EXAMPLE THE CHRYSLER HAS BEEN IN RUNNING CONDITION FOR ONLY FOUR WEEKS.

5. SECURITY. A CONTINUOUSLY DEADLINED BUT SECURITY-EQUIPPED VEHICLE PROTECTS NOTHING BUT ITS PARKING SPOT. FURTHERMORE, MANY UNCLASSIFIED

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STREETS IN THIS HILLY, RAIN-SOAKED TOWN ARE INACCESSIBLE TO HEAVY, VEHICLES -- SOMETHING WE HAVE LEARNED AT THE EXPENSE OF A COUPLE OF EXHAUST SYSTEMS. UNFORTUNATELY, ACCESS ROAD TO AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IS VIRTUALLY INACCESSIBLE TO A LONG, SLUNG CAR, AS ARE THOSE LEADING TO THE RESIDENCES OF OTHER IMPORTANT PEOPLE LIKELY TO BE VISITED OFFICIALLY BY MEMBERS OF THE MISSION. ONLY THREE OF OUR VEHICLES ARE ABLE TO GO ANYWHERE IN BANGUI: THE FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE TOYOTA, THE FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE IH PICKUP AND THE 1971 PEUGEOT 404 WHICH

IS TO BE REPLACED THIS YEAR. THE AMERICAN CARS ARE CONFINED TO ITINERARIES ON A FEW HIGH QUALITY, LEVEL ASPHALT STREETS --EXCLUDING A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT RESIDENCES AND OFFICES. NO TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF BANGUI IS POSSIBLE WITH AMERICAN VEHICLE.

6. REPRESENTATIONAL SUITABILITY. THE AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN FORCED TO ATTEND CAR NATIONAL DAY AND OTHER OFFICIAL CEREMONIES, INCLUDING THE MARCH VISIT OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENT, IN ORDINARY WHITE 1971 PEUGEOT 404 OR THE TOYOTA TRUCK. IN EACH INSTANCE THE HEAVY AMERICAN CAR WAS EITHER DEADLINED OR COULD NOT NEGOTIATE THE STREET. OUR BIG, BLACK, DEADLINED AMERICAN CARS ARE THE OBJECT OF LOCAL JOKES-- CERTAINLY NOT THE INTENTION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

7. WE URGENTLY REQUEST YOU TO AUTHORIZE PURCHASE OF A PEUGEOT 504. PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE FORD TORINO.SWING

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